

Planning, Research & Development

What You'll Find in This Issue!

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Have a Wonderful Summer !!



Families enjoying the entertainment at "Music Under the Stars."

Director's Note:

This past quarter was one filled with milestones, including the first four-year term for Mayor, and great news for the region on the BRAC process. There are many new faces on City Council that will serve the community; some for four years, others for only two. All are important to the future of El Paso. The Planning Department intends to schedule meetings with all of the newest elected officials to give them an overview of what we do and how we fit into the land development scheme of things. We will use this opportunity to make new friends and convey a basic understanding of how the zoning and subdivision codes and *The Plan for El Paso*, the city's comprehensive plan, can help create better neighborhoods and a vibrant progressive city.

Reorganization of strategic city departments has been part of City Manager Joyce Wilson's charge to the executive management team to streamline operations, provide better service to the public and make dealing with City Hall a more pleasant experience. While nothing has been finalized, the current thinking is to combine all the land development functions on a single floor. If the plan is implemented, Planning will be combined with a portion of the Building Permits and Inspection department and the Land Development division of Engineering. All three departments will be collocated to expedite application processing using the "one-stop-shop" concept. Final implementation of this proposed reorganization must await the approval of the FY 2006 Budget by Mayor and Council.

The Neighborhoods Matter program is making wonderful progress. During the first quarter, the City Council adopted a guide for the process and content of all Neighborhood Plans, known as the Neighborhood Plan Development Process. Forthcoming plans will be developed using this template, assuring consistency in both quality and content for each of them. Montoya Heights has been developing a draft text for their plan over the past year. A preview of their effort is included in this issue for your review. Please consider visiting the department's portion of the City of El Paso website at <http://www.elpasotexas.gov>. Every effort is being made to keep the site current and interesting. There is a lot of free information available. If you have a moment, take a look.

A regular feature of the newsletter is the development activity tables. The data shows that we are on pace with last year. More important is the development activity anticipated as a result of the BRAC announcement. We have already seen increased development activity this summer.

Thanks for your continued support of our efforts.

George Sarmiento, AICP



Madhu Narayanasamy: Profile of a Texas A&M Graduate*Madhu Narayanasamy*

The Planning Department has an international intern working with us this summer, Madhusudhanan Narayanasamy. Madhu, an architect in his native India, is pursuing his Master's Degree in Urban Planning at Texas A & M University.

Madhu is from Madurai, Tamil Nadu State, one of the most historic places in Southern India, located on the banks of the Vaigai River. The City of Madurai is home to the historic

Meenakshi Temple and has a rich cultural heritage originating with the Tamil Era dating back more than 2,500 years.

His primary area of study is Transportation Planning and Economics. The Department of Urban Planning at Texas A&M is located within the College of Architecture. His professors are affiliated the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI). As a research branch of the Texas Department of Transportation, the institute provides students with opportunities to obtain practical experience and a better understanding of the basic concepts and analytical methods of transportation planning, management, and policy issues.

He came to the City El Paso to complete a degree requirement to gain some practical knowledge in the planning field. He is currently working on projects using our Geographic Information System (GIS) to map arroyos as part of the background work to prepare a preservation ordinance. Also, Madhu is using his architecture background to help the department draft guidelines for historic preservation and developing a website to showcase the valuable and vast stock of historic properties in El Paso. The expanded historic website will provide an opportunity for people to learn about our West Texas history.

Madhu enjoys the challenge of complex and demanding assignments. In the long term, he plans to use his education and experience to become a consultant in the transportation and economics field. During his short stay with the Planning Department, he has become part of our family. Hopefully, he will take good memories of El Paso with him when he returns to school this fall. Best wishes from all of us in your future endeavors!



El Paso Water Utilities Northeast Master Plan: The City Plans for Extensive Development

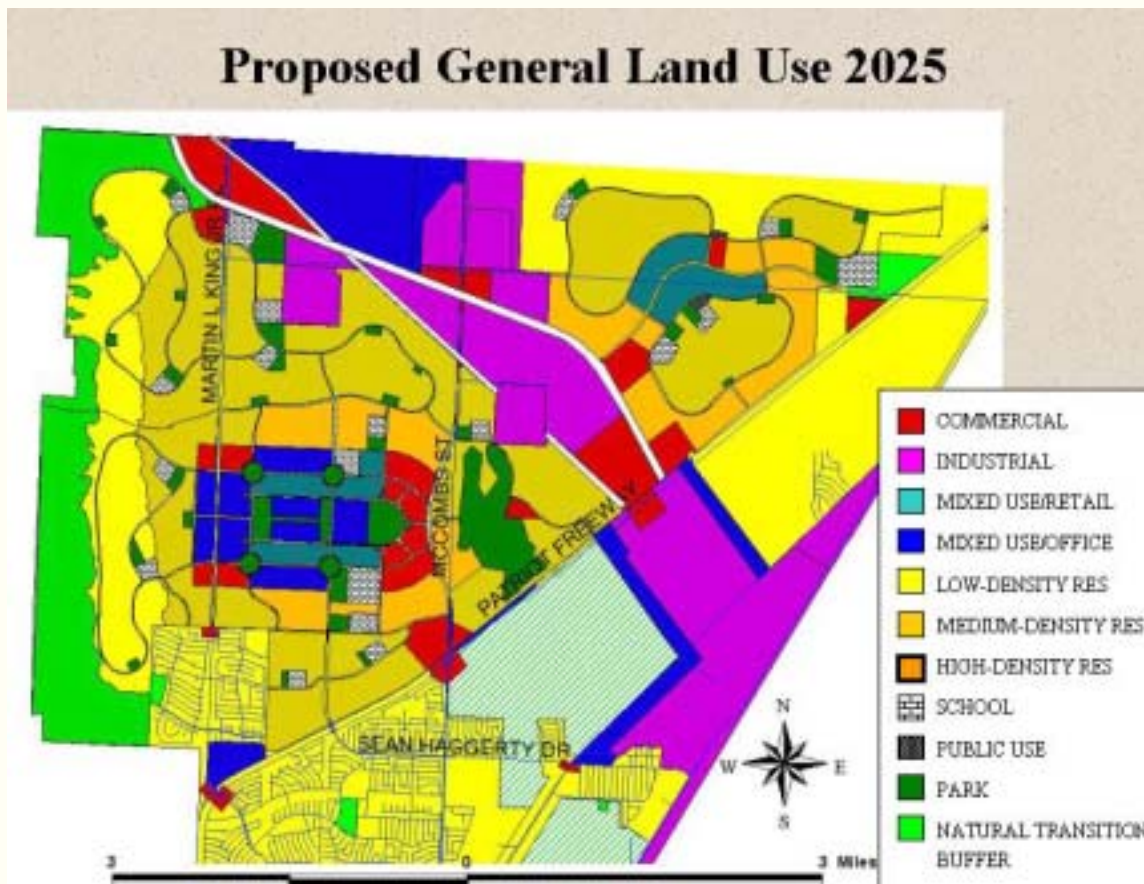
The El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU) and the City Planning, Research & Development Department are preparing for future development in the Northeast. Work began on the Northeast Master Plan in August of 2003 and later this month City Council will be reviewing ordinances to amend *The Plan for El Paso* and the Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTP) to conform to the Master Plan recommendations. The Northeast Master Plan focuses on all the land northwest of U.S. HWY 54, east of the Franklin Mountain State Park, and south of the Texas-New Mexico Border (approximately 16,000 acres).

The plan area is projected to reach build-out (full development) in about 60 years and includes concepts of new urbanism and smart growth to guide development in a way that will create unique neighborhoods and opportunities for economic growth. A primary element of the Master Plan is a town center nearly 850 acres in size. Land uses proposed for this town center are primarily commercial, high density residential and mixed-use, with parks and public uses (museums, libraries, government buildings, etc.) identified as well. The vision for the town center is to create a place that will feature community events and activities as well as providing the opportunity for people to live, interact and conduct business.

Another of the major themes of the plan is a curvilinear layout of arterial roads, which will encourage similar curvilinear road layouts during subdivision development. Much of El Paso has been developed with a grid-like road system and the Master Plan intends to introduce the non-grid concept at the higher arterial level; some El Paso subdivisions do already incorporate alternative patterns for local streets.

The population of El Paso will continue to expand and the recent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) will only accelerate this growth. Through the production of this Master Plan the EPWU and The City of El Paso are in a unique position to not only accommodate growth, but to guide it in a smart and sustainable manner.

El Paso Water Utilities Northeast Master Plan: Proposed General Land Use Map.



Montoya Heights: *Looking toward the Future*

Aerial Photograph of Montoya Heights

In 1977, the City annexed a piece of County land that is the nucleus of the Montoya Heights neighborhood. Ten years later, the rest of the neighborhood was annexed. Over the next twenty years, the neighborhood continued to mature: new families moved into the neighborhood. Children played; grew up; moved away.

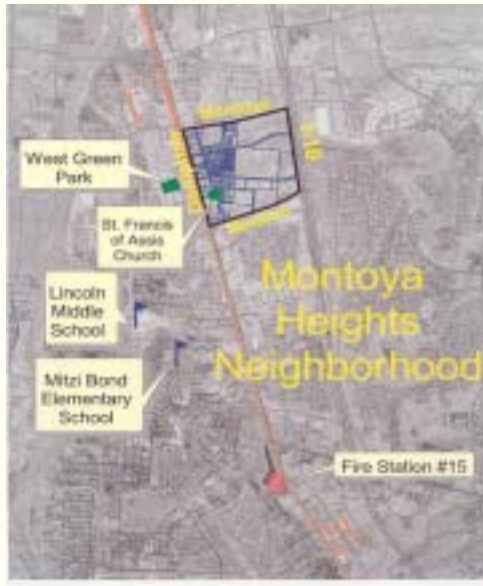
Montoya Heights has large and small arroyos running through the neighborhood. Lack of proper drainage lead to regular flooding. Water and sewer connections were unavailable to about a dozen homes. Conditions did not improve as the neighborhood matured. Therefore, a group of neighbors came together in 2000 to form the Montoya Heights Community Improvement Association (MHCIA).

They began to make a difference.

Together with the Planning Department's *Neighborhoods Matter!* program, the neighborhood undertook to develop a neighborhood plan. They have seven goals to address the issues in their neighborhood:

- Goal 1: Maintain a balance between residential and non-residential uses in the Montoya Heights neighborhood.
- Goal 2: Influence development of properties in the area to complement the neighborhood existing in accordance with Smart Growth principles.
- Goal 3: Obtain pedestrian-friendly amenities in the neighborhood to ensure a safe, efficient, well-maintained, and aesthetically appealing environment.
- Goal 4: Provide and improve public services to the neighborhood
- Goal 5: Reduce crime and promote pride in the neighborhood.
- Goal 6: Develop, enhance, and maintain a park, open space, recreational facilities, and community programs to meet the needs of the neighborhood.
- Goal 7: Improve the neighborhood's features and appearance.

Montoya Heights: *Looking toward the Future:* Continued



Location Map of Montoya Heights

Neighborhood residents met regularly over the past year to handle the preliminary requirements for the plan. Neighborhood leaders contributed greatly to the development of their plan. Further work was delayed as the Neighborhoods Matter staff worked on the neighborhood plan template per the request of the Administration. Now that the neighborhood plan development process is nearly completed and going through the public adoption process, work on the Montoya Heights Neighborhood Plan restarted after a nearly 10 month hiatus. As it stands, it will be one of the first neighborhood plans under the new process. MHCIA leaders petitioned the City Plan Commission (CPC) for a neighborhood plan after the

template process is adopted. Completion of the Montoya Heights Neighborhood Plan will be speedy as the bulk of the work and a draft of the plan has already been completed.



Neighborhoods USA Conference:

Neighborhoods, USA is a national nonprofit organization committed to building and strengthening neighborhood organizations. Created in 1975 to share information and experiences toward building stronger communities, NUSA now continues to encourage networking and information sharing to facilitate the development of partnerships between neighborhood organizations, government and the private sector.

The organizational mission of NUSA has, since its inception, been to build and strengthen neighborhood associations and to promote productive communications and collaborations between those associations and both the public and private sectors. The organization has, for over thirty years, served these broad objectives in part through the conduct of an annual conference. This provides an opportunity for people from all locations, sectors and levels of society to discuss the pressing issues of the times, share experiences and offer encouragement or assistance.

Through working with city governments and encouraging them to create partnerships with their neighborhood associations, NUSA's primary goal is to help create vibrant communities in which all residents benefit. It is the intent of NUSA, in promoting these collaborations, to achieve greater understanding of the premise that neighborhoods are truly the building blocks for overall community well-being. It is important that city officials recognize the opinions and suggestions of neighborhood associations as expressions of the quality of life issues with which they are concerned. NUSA affirms its role as advocate for neighborhoods by providing information and alternatives to help coordinate efforts for creating long-term solutions to the unique problems faced by cities and neighborhoods across the nation.

The conference took place May 25-28, 2005 in Sacramento, CA. The format of the conference was a series of workshops, conducted by Sacramento-area city and County staff, and NUSA members. Several informal networking events rounded out the event. About 800 persons from all over the United States attended the conference. City, county, and other government staff members, and members of various neighborhood associations were present.

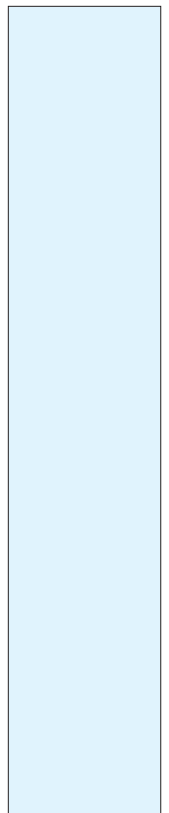
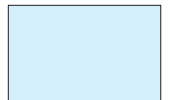
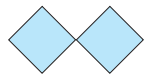
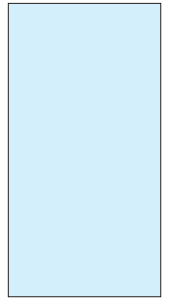


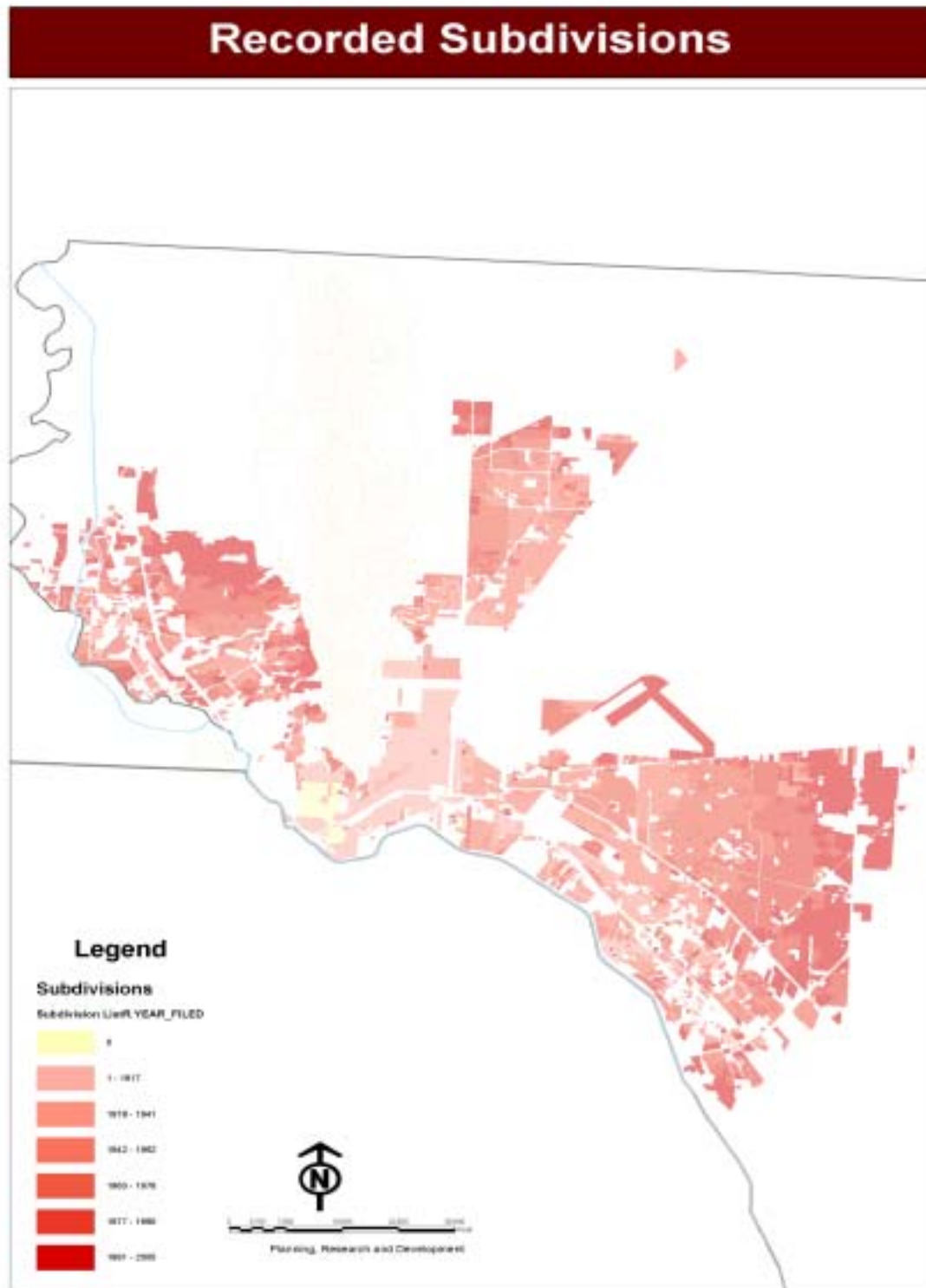
Mark Alvarado, Neighborhood Services



Soraya Ayub, Neighborhood Services

**Neighborhood Planning in Action:
Public Participation is Critical to Our Success**



New Subdivision Layer for the City's Geographic Information System:

For a more detailed view of this map, please use the Zoom Feature in Adobe Acrobat.

Price Distribution of Multiple Listings Service (MLS) Homes Sold in El Paso for 2004**Real Estate Center, Texas A & M University**<http://recenter.tamu.edu/mreports/elpaso2.asp>

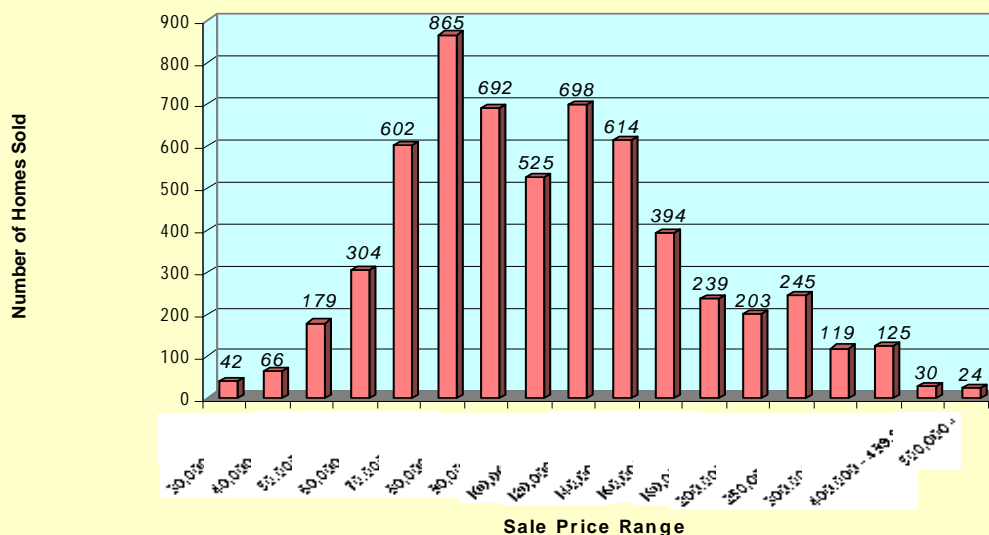
Planning, Research and Development

May, 2004

<u>Price Range</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>
< 30,000	0.7	42
30,000 - 39,999	1.1	66
40,000 - 49,999	3.0	179
50,000 - 59,999	5.1	304
60,000 - 69,999	10.1	602
70,000 - 79,999	14.5	865
80,000 - 89,999	11.6	692
90,000 - 99,999	8.8	525
100,000 - 119,999	11.7	698
120,000 - 139,999	10.3	614
140,000 - 159,999	6.6	394
160,000 - 179,999	4.0	239
180,000 - 199,999	3.4	203
200,000 - 249,999	4.1	245
250,000 - 299,999	2.0	119
300,000 - 399,999	2.1	125
400,000 - 499,999	0.5	30
<u>500,000 +</u>	<u>0.4</u>	<u>24</u>
Total	100.0	5,964

Price Distribution of Homes Sold**in El Paso for Year 2004**

Source: Texas A&M University Real Estate Center, 2005



Rezoning Cases Submitted in 2005:

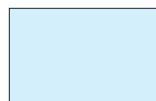
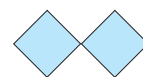
	Jan-Mar 2005	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2005	Apr-Jun 2004
Development Coordinating Committee (DCC)				
Applications Received	11		19	
Approval Recommendation	6	12	11	22
Denial Recommendation	1	2	0	1
Withdrawn Prior to DCC Review	0	1	1	1
Pending	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by DCC	7	14	11	23
City Plan Commission (CPC)				
Approval Recommendation	2	11	13	18
Denial Recommendation	1	1	0	1
Withdrawn prior to CPC Review	0	2	0	1
Pending	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by CPC	3	12	13	19
City Council				
Approval	12	2	5	19
Denial	0	0	0	2
Withdrawn Prior to CC Review	2	2	0	2
Upheld CPC Recommendation	12	0	0	12
Reversed CPC Recommendation	0	0	0	1
Pending	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>14</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by Council	12	2	4	21

Subdivision Platting Activity in 2005:

	Jan-Mar 2005	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2005	Apr-Jun 2004
Subdivisions Recorded	13	18	26	17
Dwelling Units Recorded	382	854	1,228	1,237
Acres Recorded	159.56	297.84	408.72	330.00
New SD's Processed	23	23	26	22

Detailed Site Development Plans Submitted in 2005:

	Jan-Mar 2005	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2005	Apr-Jun 2004
Development Coordinating Committee (DCC)				
Applications Received	5		8	
Approval Recommendation	1	5	3	7
Denial Recommendation	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn Prior to DCC Review	1	0	0	0
Pending	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by DCC	1	5	3	5
City Plan Commission (CPC)				
Approval Recommendation	1	3	5	6
Denial Recommendation	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn prior to CPC Review	1	0	0	0
Pending	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by CPC	1	3	5	7
City Council				
Approval	1	2	1	2
Denial	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn Prior to CC Review	0	0	1	0
Upheld CPC Recommendation	1	0	1	2
Reversed CPC Recommendation	0	0	0	0
Pending	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>3</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by Council	1	2	1	2



Special Permit Cases Submitted in 2005:

	Jan-Mar 2005	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2005	Apr-Jun 2004
Development Coordinating Committee (DCC)				
Applications Received	8		9	
Approval Recommendation	5	9	8	14
Denial Recommendation	0	0	1	1
Withdrawn Prior to DCC Review	0	1	0	0
Pending	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by DCC	5	9	8	15
City Plan Commission (CPC)				
Approval Recommendation	1	7	10	8
Denial Recommendation	0	1	0	2
Withdrawn prior to CPC Review	0	1	0	1
Pending	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by CPC	1	8	10	10
City Council				
Approval	4	0	7	12
Denial	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn Prior to CC Review	2	2	0	5
Upheld CPC Recommendation	4	0	7	9
Reversed CPC Recommendation	0	0	0	0
Pending	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>
Total Cases Reviewed by Council	4	0	7	9

Zoning Board of Adjustment Activity in 2005:

	Jan-Mar 2005	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2005	Apr-Jun 2004
Special Exceptions				
Residential				
Approved	40	46	44	33
Denied	0	1	0	0
Withdrawn	1	3	2	0
Pending	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	54	51	46	47
Special Exceptions				
Commercial				
Approved	2	1	3	4
Denied	0	0	0	0
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0
Pending	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	5	1	3	5
Variances Residential				
Approved	1	2	1	3
Denied	1	1	2	1
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0
Pending	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	3	4	3	6
Variances Commercial				
Approved	0	0	1	1
Denied	1	0	1	0
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0
Pending	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	1	0	2	2
Letters of Zoning Verification	72	72	91	66
Legal Non-Conformity Requests	22	50	29	38

Historic Preservation Cases Submitted in 2005**Certificates of Appropriateness**

Historic District	Jan-Mar 2005	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2005	Apr-Jun 2004
Austin Terrace	0	0	4	1
Chihuahuita	0	0	0	0
Downtown	1	1	3	0
Magoffin	0	0	3	0
Manhattan Heights	0	1	7	2
Old San Francisco	0	0	0	0
Sunset Heights	1	0	2	4
Ysleta	2	1	0	0
Mission Trail	0	0	2	0
Independent	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	4	3	21	7

Administrative Review Approval

Austin Terrace	2	5	6	11
Chihuahuita	0	1	3	1
Downtown	0	0	1	0
Magoffin	0	2	1	2
Manhattan Heights	4	5	6	7
Old San Francisco	0	0	0	0
Sunset Heights	3	19	15	14
Ysleta	4	1	1	1
Mission Trail	0	0	0	0
Independent	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	13	33	34	37

Community Calendar: Citywide Meeting Schedule

July through September, 2005

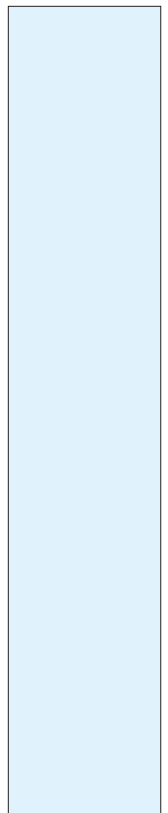
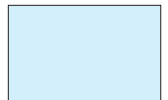
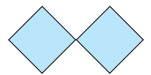
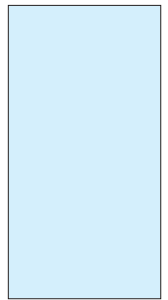
(For Information concerning Neighborhood Association Meetings, please proceed to the Neighborhoods First portion of the City website: <http://www.elpasotexas.gov>)

July

- July 5 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- July 11 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- July 14 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- July 18 Water Conservation Advisory Board: 3:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4904
- July 18 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- July 25 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- July 28 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- July 29 El Paso Mountain Committee: 9:00 AM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4024

August

- August 1 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- August 8 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- August 11 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- August 15 Water Conservation Advisory Board: 3:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4904
- August 15 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- August 22 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- August 23 San Juan Neighborhood Plan. Second Public Meeting. 6:30 PM, San Juan Church Hall, 5647 Dailey, 541-4502
- August 25 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- August 26 El Paso Mountain Committee: 9:00 AM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4024



Community Calendar: Continued**September**

- September 6 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- September 8 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- September 12 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- September 18 Water Conservation Advisory Board: 3:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4904
- September 19 Historic Landmark Commission: 4:00 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- September 22 City Plan Commission: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024
- September 30 El Paso Mountain Committee: 9:00 AM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, Planning Conference Room, 541-4024
- September 26 Zoning Board of Adjustment: 1:30 PM, 2 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, 541-4024

Helpful Telephone Numbers:

<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Telephone:</u>	<u>Activity:</u>	<u>Telephone:</u>
Main Office	541-4024	Long Range Planning	541-4633
Director	541-4193	Neighborhoods First	541-4918
Demographics	541-4721	<u>Neighborhood Planners:</u>	
Historic Preservation	541-4930	Northeast	541-4932
		Northwest	541-4730
		Central	541-4502
		East	541-4931
		Lower Valley	541-4192
<u>Land Development:</u>		Transportation	541-4632
Addresses	541-4936	Planning	
Cartography	541-4935		
Subdivisions	541-4925		
ZBA	541-4027		
Zoning	541-4930		